

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1958

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SREF, UR

SUBJECT: JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM Leningrad

REF: Leningrad 163, MOSCOW 1253

1. THIS CABLE REPORTS CURRENT EMIGRATION SITUATION IN Leningrad IN LIGHT OF RECENT PERMISSIONS AND REFUSALS IN Leningrad JEWISH COMMUNITY. SOURCE IS Leningrad REFUSENIK WITH CLOSE TIES WITHIN COMMUNITY.

2. JEWISH ARTIST JURIY KALENDAROV, TWICE-REFUSED, JUST RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM Leningrad OVIR ON FEBRUARY 5 TO DEPART SOVIET UNION. HE IS ONE OF ELEVEN Leningrad JEWS (7 "OLD" REFUSENIKS AND 4 MORE RECENT APPLICANTS) TO RECEIVE EXIT PERMISSION IN RECENT WEEKS. THE OTHER TEN ARE: VLADIMIR KRICHEVSKIY (FAMILY OF 4); IZRAEL VARNAVITSKIY (2); LEV ZHIGUN (1); IRMA CHERNYAK (2); SAMUEL STAROBINETS (1); MIRRA PRITSKER (2); LEONARD FONAREV (4); DAVID RAVKIN (1) RAFAIL MINYEVICH (1); AND A PERSON NAMED SHATS WHO HAS BEEN A REFUSENIK FOR ONLY ONE MONTH UPON FIRST APPLICATION.

3. TWO NEW REFUSENIKS ARE LEV PINSKIY, A DENTIST WHO WAS EMPLOYED UNTIL 4 YEARS AGO IN THE MILITIA POLYCLINIC, AND LEV VELISOHN, REFUSED ON THE BASIS OF ARMY SERVICE. TWO RECONFIRMED REFUSALS RECENTLY ARE YAKOV EPSTEIN, TOLD TO APPLY AGAIN IN SEPTEMBER 1976 (ORIGINALLY TOLD, FOR WHATEVER
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REASON, NOT BEFORE 1984), AND GIRGORIY IOFFE, TOLD THAT

PERMISSION MIGHT BE GRANTED LATER IN 1976 OR EARLY 1977.

4. LENINGRAD OVIR HAS REPORTEDLY IMPLEMENTED NEW PROCEDURES FOR EMIGRATION APPLICATIONS AS OF FEBRUARY 6 WHICH PROVIDE FOR PERSONS TO SUBMIT PAPERS AT MILITIA HEADQUARTERS IN DISTRICT OF RESIDENCE. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER SUBSEQUENT REPLIES WILL COME FROM DISTRICT MILITIA OR FROM OVIR DIRECTLY. IN ANY EVENT, THIS CHANGE WILL MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR REFUSENIK COMMUNITY IN LENINGRAD TO KEEP TRACK OF COMINGS AND GOINGS OF NEW APPLICANTS, PERMISSIONS, REFUSEALS, ETC. SINCE PREVIOUS PRACTICE HAS BEEN TO HAVE REFUSENIK "DUTY OFFICER" PRESENT AT OVIR DURING HOURS OPEN TO PUBLIC. ONE OTHER PARTICULAR CHANGE IS CONSIDERED GOOD OVERALL, NAMELY RELAXATION OF NUMBER OF REQUIRED REFERENCES (KHARAKTERISTKI), ESPECIALLY ELIMINATION OF REQUIRED REFERENCES FROM EMPLOYERS AND "COLLECTIVE." FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH, NUMBER OF SOURCES HAVE COMMENTED ON FACT THAT OVIR CLERKS HAVE SUDDENLY BECOME VERY POLITE AND COOPERATIVE IN DEALING WITH NEW APPLICANTS AND REFUSENIK REAPPLICATIONS.

5. SIZE OF LENINGRAD REFUSENIK COMMUNITY NOW STANDS AT APPROXIMATELY 84 FAMILIES COUNTING RECONSIDERATIONS AND NEW REFUSALS.
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